

Remarks/Arguments

Claim Objections

Examiner objected to claim 9 as being an apparatus claim dependent upon an independent method claim.

Claim 9 has been amended to be dependent upon independent apparatus claim 8. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the basis for the objection has been removed and that the objection should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kwon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,168,050) ("Kwon").

The claims have been amended to clarify that the term "menu items" that was used in the previous versions of the claims referred to individual button elements, not also to groups of button objects. (Specification, page 1, lines 21-29, page 2, lines 18-32 and page 3, lines 21-26) Specifically, to clarify this difference, the independent claims have been amended to refer to selectable "menu buttons" instead of "menu items." Furthermore, claims 2 and 9 have been amended to clarify that the areas associated with different groups do not overlap. (Specification, page 3, lines 13-16)

It is respectfully submitted that Kwon neither teaches nor suggests a method for generating a displayable menu:

"wherein not more than one menu button within a group may be enabled simultaneously,"

as described in currently amended claim 1.

A problem addressed by the present invention is that menus for interactive video content are rather static, as there is no way to dynamically add or remove buttons from the screen without re-rendering the whole screen. For content authors, more sophisticated menu features would be desirable, such as the inclusion of sub-menus. In such a case, additional buttons would dynamically appear and disappear through user interaction. (Specification, page 1)

To solve this problem, the present invention provides a method to generate such dynamic menus. The claims describe a method and associated apparatus for generating a displayable menu comprising separately rendered selectable menu buttons, wherein at least one group of menu buttons is defined having an associated area on the display. As described in claim 1, a menu button may belong to not more than one group. Furthermore, an “enabled” or “disabled” state is assigned to each menu button. Only an enabled menu button may be displayed and not more than one menu button within a group may be enabled simultaneously.

In contrast, Kwon addresses the separate problem that “as a sub-menu is displayed, the main menu which had previously been displayed disappears and only the sub-menu items of the selected main menu item are displayed on the screen.” (Kwon, column 1, lines 25-28) Kwon explains that “the relation between the main menu items and sub-menu items cannot easily be understood at a glance because the main menu disappears when a sub-menu is displayed. Therefore, if a particular function is not displayed by a sub-menu item, a user must search for the function by returning and selecting different menu items, which would be inconvenient to a user as well as a waste of time.” (Kwon, column 1, lines 36-42)

To address this distinct problem, Kwon teaches an “On Screen Display device and method for displaying a menu is disclosed. In the present invention, a plurality of OSD main menu items are displayed on a screen and a space between adjacent menu items is opened to display sub-menu items. Thus, a user can conveniently select a menu as the menu items and the sub-menu items are simultaneously displayed. Accordingly, a limited area of the screen can effectively be used to display more menus.” (Kwon Abstract)

Kwon does not describe a grouping of buttons wherein at any given time not more than one button of a group is enabled (i.e., visible) while the other buttons of the group are disabled (i.e., not visible). Furthermore, Kwon does not describe separately rendering single button objects, but instead describes the use of groups of buttons. There is no indication in Kwon's disclosure that single buttons would be separately rendered. Instead, in all described embodiments, Kwon shows that all buttons within a group are visible, and therefore, enabled. Thus, Kwon neither teaches nor suggests a method for generating a displayable menu "wherein not more than one menu button within a group may be enabled simultaneously," as described in currently amended claim 1.

In view of the above remarks and amendments to the claims, it is respectfully submitted that currently amended claim 1 is allowable. It is further submitted that currently amended independent claims 8 and 12 are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable. Since dependent claims 2-7 and 9-11 are dependent from allowable independent claims 1 and 8, it is submitted that they too are allowable for at least the same reasons that their respective independent claims are allowable.

Having fully addressed the Examiner's rejections, it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly then, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's representative at (609) 734-6813, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

No fee is believed due. However, if a fee is due, please charge the additional fee to
Deposit Account 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,
Jobst HOERENTRUP, et al.

By: /Reitseng Lin/
Reitseng Lin
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 42,804
Phone (609) 734-6813

Patent Operations
Thomson Licensing Inc.
P.O. Box 5312
Princeton, New Jersey 08543-5312

Date: 191108